

1955

music

Journal



Inside the Metropolitan Opera House

Manus: North and South—Franklin D. Roosevelt

Manus: Prodigy—Alexander D. Kozlov

Manus: Sally Sweetland . . . Earl Rogers . . . Ray Charles . . . Jack M. Watson

Manus: The Metropolitan Opera House

Manus: North and South—Franklin D. Roosevelt

Manus: Prodigy—Alexander D. Kozlov

Manus: Sally Sweetland . . . Earl Rogers . . . Ray Charles . . . Jack M. Watson



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Cover photograph: Bringing in the Yule Log.
(Courtesy Canadian Pacific Railway)

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Editorially Speaking . . .

THE December issue of a magazine traditionally plays up the spirit of Christmas, but *Music Journal* is inclined to be a bit independent in this respect. Actually our readers were given a preview of Christmas music last month, both in the announcements of our advertisers and in the suggestions contained in Jack Watson's educational Round Table.

Currently we offer Elizabeth May's delightful account of some unusual ways of celebrating Christmas, with fascinating pictures, one of which appears on the cover of this issue. But we also pay our respects to the opening of the Metropolitan Opera broadcasts through the intimate and informative account of this popular radio program by the well known journalist, Paul V. Beckley. We offer a poetic tribute to Jean Sibelius on his goth birthday (Dec. 8); Mana-Zucca discusses the opposite extreme of precocious musical children, from the standpoint of personal experience; and there is a variety of material from other distinguished authorities, with timely emphasis on singing and concert bands.

Regardless of individual interests, and with due recognition of all the potentialities of the holiday season, we sincerely wish all our friends a musical and a merry Christmas!

PERHAPS it is not too late to mention several important books that have appeared recently, with a suggestion of their possible use as Christmas gifts. Two of them are unusually handsome as well as practical collections of songs.

Particularly timely is *A Treasury of Christmas Songs and Carols*, edited and annotated by Henry Simon, head of the Music Department of Simon & Schuster. (In this case, however, the publishers are the Houghton Mifflin Company of Boston.) Mr. Simon had already done a similar service to hymns and grand opera, and he again uses his musical experience and good taste to excellent advantage. His collection contains not only the established music of Christmas but much comparatively unfamiliar material, all supplied with illuminating comments. The editor has been assisted by Rudolph Fellner in the piano arrangements, and the colored pictures are by Rafaello Busoni (another good name in music).

Unstinted praise can also be given to *The Jerome Kern Song Book*, edited by Oscar Hammerstein II and published by Simon & Schuster in co-operation with the T. B. Harms Company. Mr. Kern's outstanding collaborator and lyricist has selected fifty of the composer's most popular songs, newly arranged with simple piano accom-

paniments by Dr. Albert Sirmay.

The permanent place of Jerome Kern in the music of America and the entire world is amply proved in this beautiful volume. What strikes one most forcibly is that the creator of these melodies maintained a practically uniform standard over about forty years, regardless of the authors of the lyrics. In some way they all seemed to derive inspiration from the genius of the composer. It is immensely satisfying to have such a collection appear just in time for Christmas.

To the rich store of information on music supplied by David Ewen through the years is now added an *Encyclopedia of the Opera*, published by A. A. Wyn, which is all that the title implies. In a fat volume of nearly 600 pages, Mr. Ewen has managed to answer practically all the questions that anyone could possibly think of asking about opera. The book should supply material for the entire season of the Metropolitan Opera Quiz.

Full of charming reminiscence is the latest work by the veteran Arthur M. Abell, *Talks with Great Composers*, a publication of the New York Philosophical Library. The author was personally acquainted with such giants as Brahms, Joachim, Max Bruch, Grieg, Puccini and Richard Strauss, and he brings them all to life in a series of vivid recollections.

Both pictorially and textually there is tremendous value in the two volumes of *Musical Autographs*, edited by Emanuel Winternitz for the Princeton University Press. For pure scholarship and research, it would be hard to match this significant publication as of today. In examining the facsimiles of notation, all the way from Monteverdi to Hindemith, one sometimes wonders how the manuscripts were ever deciphered by their original editors and publishers. Beethoven is full smears and corrections, often with almost illegible notes. Wagner is perhaps the most legible of them all, and Brahms is not hard to follow. The two volumes are in effect a home museum of the history of music.

Grand opera again receives intimate and personal attention in a new book by Mary Jane Matz called *Opera Stars in the Sun*. The publishers are Farrar, Straus and Cudahy, Inc., with the Metropolitan Opera Guild assisting as distributors. Milton Cross, "Mr. Opera" himself, supplies a helpful Preface. The interesting text, which deals with the off-stage habits and idiosyncrasies of operatic singers, is supplemented by candid camera shots and drawings, all adding up to an intensely absorbing holiday book.

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In and Out of Tune

SIGMUND SPAETH



MOTION pictures are still making progress in putting good music on the screen, in the lighter as well as the more serious forms. The latter category includes a filmed life of Richard Wagner, soon to be released by Republic Pictures under the title of *Magic Fire*.

Aside from the fact that this production contains some of the greatest dramatic music ever written, well staged by European artists, it offers a plot that should appeal to the most violently emotional movie fans. For Wagner presented the baffling paradox of a man of completely amoral character, ignoring all the conventions of human society and using as his excuse a genius that was universally recognized in time.

The story of his three outstanding loves,—Minna Planer and Cosima Liszt von Buelow, both of whom he married, and the secret Isolde, Mathilde von Wesendonck, has enough sensual excitement to satisfy the most rabid sadist, and the courage of the man, amounting to absolute effrontery in its sublime self-confidence, actually creates both sympathy and admiration, regardless of all ethical questions. *Magic Fire* is sure to be a controversial picture, and if it brings new listeners to recognize the greatness of the Wagnerian music, so much the better.

On the lighter side we have recently seen two of the most successful stage musicals of modern times, *Oklahoma!* and *Guys and Dolls*, brought to the screen in productions that are definitely superior to the originals.

The creators of *Oklahoma!* kept a close watch on every detail of this monumental film and took full advantage of the camera's command of the great out-doors, which includes the elaborate "Dream Ballet" of the original choreographer, Agnes de Mille. There is no hesitation in repeating the already familiar numbers, which follow each other in a new order, without worrying too much about the slender plot. Such interpreters as the experienced Gordon MacRae, the Cinderella-girl Shirley Jones, the surprisingly funny Gloria Grahame, Charlotte Greenwood, Eddie Albert and Gene Nelson, with a novel villain played by Rod Steiger, do ample justice to both words and music.

Samuel Goldwyn's six million dollar production of *Guys and Dolls* also represents an enormous advance in screen musicals. The casting of Jean Simmons and Marlon Brando in the two most important roles is pure inspiration, and their singing and dancing comes remarkably close to the standards of their acting. Frank Sinatra is in the same class, and no one could possibly improve on Vivian Blaine.



THE QUESTION BOX

Q: Just what is the background of "The Yellow Rose of Texas", attributed to a former soda-jerker named Don George? I feel sure it is really an old song.

—C.D.H., Roanoke, Va.

A: You are entirely right. The original song was published in 1858, signed by the initials J.K., and became very popular during the War between the States. Its tune was imitated by Paul Dresser in 1895 with "Just Tell Them That You Saw Me".

Questions used entitle the senders to free copies of the Spaeth book, *MUSIC FOR EVERYBODY*.

The Florida Music Educators' Association, Frances Deen, President, will hold an important clinic in Tampa, January 5-7, 1956, with a number of nationally known musicians in attendance. The official publication of the organization is *The School Director*, edited by Wallace Gause, Box 5566, Tampa, Florida.

For its 50th anniversary the Juilliard School of Music has commissioned new works by 33 American composers and two choreographers, to be performed during a Festival of American Music in February and April, 1956. Compositions in the larger forms will be created by Leonard Bernstein, David Diamond, Vittorio Giannini, Roy Harris, Peter Mennin, Walter Piston, Roger Sessions, Bernard Wagenaar and Robert Ward.

A series of 12 Operalogues is offered this season by the Music Center of the Pennsylvania College for Women, Woodland Road, Pittsburgh, Pa., under the direction of Karl Kritz and Wm. Von Wymetal. A summer series and Opera Workshop will be directed by Boris Goldovsky.

The Trapp Family Singers have reorganized under the title of The Trapp Singers, with Rev. Franz Wassner still acting as conductor and as director of the family music camp at Stowe, Vermont. The group is now under the management of Tac-Li Productions, 121 E. 37th St., New York City.

The National Federation of Music Clubs will repeat the successful "Parade of American Music" in February, which last year produced more than 5,000 all-American programs within the month. Mrs. Ada Holding Miller, who originated the plan, will again be in charge of details, as announced by the Federation's new President, Mrs. Ronald A. Dougan, of Beloit, Wisconsin. It is also announced that Thor Johnson now serves as the Federation's Chairman of Symphony Orchestras, with Dr. Howard Hanson heading a newly formed Vocational Guidance Committee and John Tasker Howard added to the editorial staff of the *Music Clubs Magazine*.

DECEMBER, 1955

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Christmas: North and South

ELIZABETH MAY



Mexico's Substitute for the Christmas Stocking.

THE Christmas season throughout the great expanse of the United States will be marked by observances familiar to all of us, a mixture of religious and pagan rites from many sources, which have become our much loved American tradition.

School choirs, from elementary grades through college, will be presenting Christmas pageants in hushed and crowded auditoriums. *O Little Town of Bethlehem*, *The First Noël* and *Silent Night* will sound over the land. Shopping centers, ablaze with lights and decorations, will hardly contain the Christmas shoppers. Children, with skepticism proportionate to their years, will send their gift lists to Santa Claus and hang over the mantel the biggest sock they can wangle. Vacant lots will become for a brief period forests of fir-trees to be transported to living-room windows and there hung with tinsel, cranberries and multi-colored lights.

On Christmas Eve and Christmas Day church services of many denominations will celebrate the Nativity. And finally there will be the great family dinner, the gathering of the clan, with its good and dismal moments.

This is the general and cherished pattern. However, there are still a few places in North America where

groups from other cultures celebrate Christmas according to their own customs. I have had the good fortune recently to witness two of these observances, one in the south and one in the north.

The first was at Padua Institute in Padua Hills, California, where a company of Mexican musicians and artisans each year present their traditional Christmas celebration for the residents of the Los Angeles area. They are part of a small settlement of Mexicans who support themselves by their ancient folk arts in silver, pottery, leather work, music, and

cooking. Although this Christmas fiesta is open to the public, one has the feeling that it would be much the same without an audience. The celebration is first of all for themselves.

Here, on a simple stage, a little black-eyed girl of about seven, a born actress, held together a thread of story in which one saw through the child's eyes the whole traditional Christmas, beginning with the hanging of the papier maché piñata, stuffed with gifts, high on the rafters of the peasant home, later to be struck with a stick by a blindfolded



The Piñata Is Broken to Let the Christmas Gifts Tumble Out

Elizabeth May is now working for a doctor's degree in folk music at U.C.L.A. She has taught there also, as well as at San José and Sacramento State Colleges and in the Oakland Public Schools.

child until it broke and tumbled out its trinkets. While her parents are at church, little Panchita falls asleep and one sees her dreams of the Bible story: the Annunciation, Mary and Joseph, with flowers in his hat, seeking shelter; the Wise Men, the shepherds, male and female, in Bavarian costume, with lovely garlanded crooks; the devil jumping up from the ground to make trouble; and the Adoration at the Manger. Panchita wakes, her parents return, and the neighbors come singing carols and asking for shelter as they do for nine days at Christmas,—the *Posadas*. They are welcomed, and the gayest fiesta in the world ensues, with traditional songs, dances, and the smashing of *cascarones* (gaily decorated eggshells) on unwary heads.

Dramatizing a Dream

Panchita's dream, properly called a *Colloquio*, originated in Bavaria centuries ago. From there it found its way to Spain, whence it was quite naturally brought to the New World by the devout *conquistadores*. In parts of Southern California and in New and Old Mexico, the *Colloquio* is still performed by itself and at greater length, occasionally beginning with Adam and Eve. One of the instruments in constant use at Padua Hills also came to Mexico from Spain, the beautiful psaltery, here expertly played. The *Posadas* play which I witnessed originated in the little town of La Cañada de Carrecho in the Mexican state of Guanajuato.

Six hours away by airplane, in Victoria, British Columbia, possibly the most English city in Canada, several hundred guests gather on Christmas night at the great Empress Hotel, a Canadian Pacific queen, for another traditional celebration. I was one of many Americans who had made reservations months before for this rather famous event.

The Canadians present knew just what to expect. Their forebears had brought the ceremony with them from England, and it had not been altered a jot or a tittle, nor would it ever be. As the Empress describes her festival:

"Two thousand Christian years plus untold decades of heathen myth and legendry make up the traditions of the annual Empress Yuletide Festival.



Adoration at the Manger as Played South of the Border.

tival. In English feudal times the Yule log, destined to crackle a welcome in the great baronial hall to all comers, young and old, rich and poor, was drawn by feudal retainers from its resting-place in the forest. And as it passed on its appointed way, wayfarers raised their hats, for they knew the log to be full of promise and good cheer. Its leaping flames would burn out old wrongs and cause the liquor to bubble in the wassail bowl, which was quaffed to drown year-old feuds and animosities.

An Old Tradition

"As in the days of Good Queen Bess, the Yule log at the Empress is 'fired' by an Important Personage, with a splinter kept from the log of the previous year. For, so goes the fable, if a splinter is saved from one Yule log to the next and kept under a bed in the house during the twelve months, no danger, either fire or crime, will approach the dwelling.

"Again holding to the Elizabethan custom, the Empress Festival has a Jester, or fun-maker; woodcutters who draw the log, presumably from the forest; Steward and Seneschal, officers of a great manorial household; singers who give thanks to God in carols and canticles, and heralds, whose silver bugles an-

nounce the approach of the Ancient and Honorable Procession of the Boar's Head."

Following this ceremony, the guests sat down contentedly to roast beef, Yorkshire pudding and red crepe paper snappers, while the mummers wandered from table to table, singing the carols which everyone knew.

It is heartening that these festivals of other lands are being preserved on this continent with such vigor and completeness. Rapidity of travel and communication, for all their advantages, threaten the continuance of folk ways and folk music. Let us each one encourage their preservation by whatever means we can! ▶▶▶

A recent program by the Oberlin Symphony Band contained half a dozen contemporary works: a *Concerto Grosso* by Joseph Wagner; Burnet Tuthill's *Overture for Symphonic Band*, Op.19; Stravinsky's *Symphonies of Wind Instruments*; Alfred Reed's *Caribbean Suite*; Percy Grainger's band settings of English folk tunes and the Respighi arrangement of Rossini's *Fantastic Toy Shop*. The only piece of ancient music was Gossec's *Classic Overture* in C. The concert is cited as an example of up-to-date programming.

Inside the Metropolitan Opera Broadcasts

PAUL V. BECKLEY

IF the question were asked, "What opera house is the largest in the world?", the answers, no doubt, would range from New York's Metropolitan to Milan's La Scala and Buenos Aires' Teatro Colon. But these answers would be far from correct. For the largest opera house in the world is a small, multi-tubed miracle called the radio, through whose loudspeakers some 16 million American listeners every Saturday afternoon turn their living-rooms into ringing halls of song.

The Metropolitan Opera broadcasts, now entering their sixteenth consecutive year under the sponsorship of The Texas Company, are the major live musical program on radio today. It has been said, and not without accuracy, that they have done more to stimulate an interest in opera than all the textbooks printed on the subject since its tentative start late in the 16th century. At any rate, the Metropolitan Opera broadcasts have become an irreplaceable luxury. Through the magic carpet of radio, great music can be had for the twist of a dial.

Saturday afternoon's ABC network broadcasts, however, are not solely confined to music. In fact, a good part of the program's popularity rests on the spoken intermission features that take place between the acts. And they, too, have become a listener luxury, a fact proved by the thousands of letters they draw week after week, year after year.

At the center of the complex and multifarious operation that brings these prize-winning features into being is a blonde, blue-eyed Kansan of Italian parentage, Geraldine Souvaine, who regards music as the most pervasive and influential commodity in nature. Mrs. Souvaine is the



Geraldine Souvaine

Photo by Dr. I. W. Schmidt

widow of Henry Souvaine, who not only started the Texaco broadcasts in 1940 but is generally considered to be one of the founders of serious music programming on the air. He was, she insists, her teacher. In everything she does, Geraldine Souvaine reflects credit on the boundless instruction she received.

Mrs. Souvaine has a wary editor's eye and a supple, darting brain. She firmly believes that contact with music is an ennobling experience and she consequently channels all her efforts into bringing as much music as she can to as many people as possible. Music, in fact, is her

life,—she even hated turning off her record-player long enough to be interviewed. Parenthetically, it ought to be noted that her favorite composers are Beethoven and Verdi.

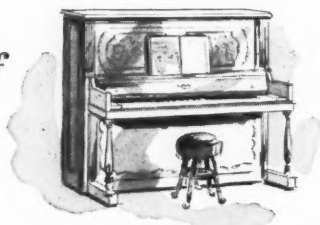
The opera broadcast features, over which Mrs. Souvaine wields complete authority, are planned as fifteen-minute spots neatly fitted into the intermission gaps. Neatly? Not quite. Opera, an eminently human endeavor, is founded squarely on the temperaments of the hundreds of people responsible for it; rigidity, therefore, is out of the question. Opera intermissions, for example, though they may be perfectly planned to the second, sometimes expand in length, sometimes contract. Mrs. Souvaine's existence, therefore, is a thing bounded by hasty, unanticipated deletions and off-the-cuff additions. She virtually lives with a stopwatch in her eye and a red pencil in her hand. Quick, last minute decisions are commonplace and the entire success of an intermission may stand or fall on one of them. Does it harry Geraldine Souvaine? Not in the least. She loves every hectic moment of it.

But sudden emergencies account for only a few of Mrs. Souvaine's problems. The others center on the matter of spontaneity, for she takes great pride in the knowledge that her broadcasts have a wonderfully casual and unlabored air. Indeed, Mrs. Souvaine doesn't even like to admit that the programs are written out and rehearsed beforehand. Yet, aside from the Texaco Opera Quiz—which must be unrehearsed since the experts naturally cannot be told what questions they are to answer—everything else is in script form, edited by Mrs. Souvaine, re-written,

(Continued on page 20)

The writer of this inside story of the Metropolitan Opera broadcasts is a staff member of The New York Herald-Tribune, whose intimate and highly personal reports have covered a variety of subjects, including music.

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Confessions of a Musical Prodigy

MANA-ZUCCA

THE chief trouble with being a musical prodigy is that people continue to regard you as one, even after you grow up. It is not generally realized that practically every musician to have achieved success, either as a creator or as an interpreter, has been a childhood prodigy. In most cases, however, this precociousness was not publicly exploited, so the little geniuses remained comparatively obscure until they could be considered mature artists.

I find it difficult, if not embarrassing, to criticize the exploitation of musically gifted children, for I

went through it myself at a tender age and it seemed to have no tragic results. Today I am rather pleased to have people still think of me as a prodigy, even when they imply that allowances should be made for my youth!

Some Contradictions

The most famous "Wunderkinder" of musical history have presented rather contradictory statistics as regards their early exploitation. Frankly, I am convinced that Mozart's untimely death was hastened by the strain imposed upon him in his childhood by a demanding father. He also suffered from the inability of patrons and public alike to take him seriously, to which his small size and naive manner may have contributed. In any case, he had difficulty in persuading his admirers that it might be necessary to make a living, and he died in extreme pov-



erty, in spite of possessing perhaps the greatest natural talent of all time.

Modern prodigies, like Josef Hofmann and Yehudi Menuhin, profited by a period of retirement and intensive study, after their youthful concertizing, and this unquestionably increased their adult musical stature, besides giving the public a chance
(Continued on page 22)

Mana-Zucca, in private life Mrs. Irwin M. Cassel, is best known by the popular art song I Love Life, but has written many significant works in the larger forms. Her new Violin Concerto is scheduled for a world premiere at Hunter College, New York on the evening of December 9, with Joan Field as soloist and Enrico Leide conducting.



Mana-Zucca at the Age of Four.

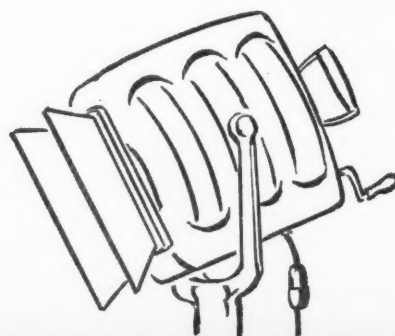
A SONNET TO SIBELIUS (On his 90th Birthday, Dec. 8, 1955)

When God seems far away and Truth seems dim,
We trace the footpaths to this poet of tone
Whose music soars in one triumphant hymn,—
And we no longer face the night alone.
Our hearts have called for comfort, and we see
And hear our dreams and longings satisfied
For one true glimpse of deep serenity
Where peace of mind and soul at last abide.
A door is opened, and our struggling souls
Now know the heights he scaled, can understand
The world bequeathed to us, the hard-won goals
Set in immortal music by his hand,
For in his deathless, fearless themes we find
The orchestration of a noble mind.

—ALBERT W. DOWLING

Talent Victors!

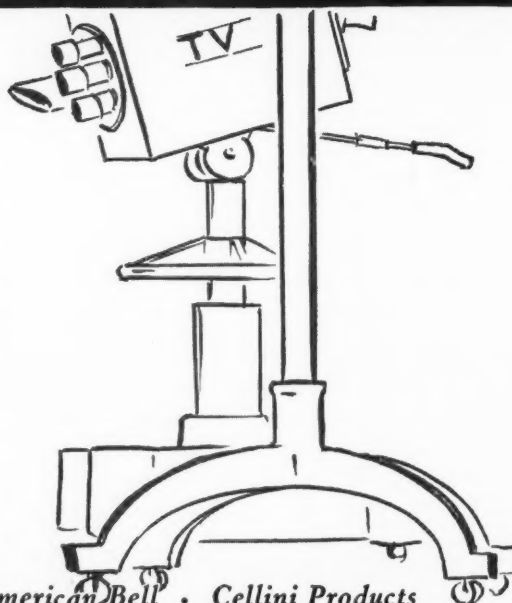
DICK CONTINO and his
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Concerning Band Associations

ARTHUR L. WILLIAMS



TOO few musicians, including many directors of bands, are aware of the activities which are being carried on currently by various groups of American bandmasters on behalf of every director of a band, whether working in an elementary school or on the community or professional level, and including all the school levels in between. Here are a few of these cooperative associations of band directors.

The American School Band Directors Association

Since the end of World War II the band directors in our elementary, junior and senior high schools throughout the United States have felt increasingly the need for getting together annually for the purpose of talking shop and exchanging ideas. No doubt this need has been heightened by the fact that the last National School Music Competition-Festival, with 75,000 school pupils enrolled in ten region events, was held in 1941. Since this date, due to war conditions at first, no interstate competitions have been held.

Thus, with the active support of leading American bandmasters on all band levels, the American School Band Directors Association came into being in Cedar Rapids, Iowa on November 21-22, 1953, with Dale C. Harris of Pontiac, Michigan elected first as Acting Chairman and then President, which post he holds to

Arthur L. Williams is Chairman of the Public Relations Committee of the American Bandmasters Association, Publicity Chairman for the College Band Directors National Association, a member of the editorial staff of BAND GUIDE magazine and Director of Bands at Oberlin College.

date. The stated purposes of this new Association of "High, Junior High and Grade School Band Directors of Public, Private and Parochial Schools in the United States, Canada, and Mexico" are: (1) the betterment of school bands; (2) to provide a means of contact between school band men from different sections of the country; (3) to develop a national voice for the school band man and to make that voice articulate through the medium of the Association; (4) to serve as an authoritative means of liaison between the largest group of instrumental music teachers in the United States—the School Band Directors—and music publishers and musical instrument manufacturers.

College Band Directors National Association

It was in 1938 that the Music Educators National Conference first established its Committee on College Bands, which became the College Band Directors Conference in 1940 and was a year later organized as a national body, with William D. Revelli of the University of Michigan as its first President. Almost 200 Directors and Assistant Directors of college and university bands now meet biennially in Chicago and in six national division meetings in the in-between years. Committees which function actively throughout the year include those for (1) Promoting Original Compositions for Band; (2) Band Literature; (3) Commissioning Works for Band and (4) Tonal Relations. These committees, with the support of Associate Members from the music industries, compile vital lists of current mate-

rials, besides presenting outstanding performances of new band literature. Hugh E. McMillen of the University of Colorado currently serves this group as President.

American Bandmasters Association

Knowing full well the problems confronting American Bands, yet realizing that bandmasters did not really know each other, Edwin Franko Goldman, with the enthusiastic support of John Philip Sousa, in 1929 called together a group of prominent bandmasters from the United States and Canada for a discussion held in New York City. This was the beginning of the American Bandmasters Association, which was formed (1) for mutual helpfulness and the promotion of better music through the instrumentality of the Band; (2) to secure the adoption of a universal band instrumentation so that publications of all countries will be interchangeable; (3) to induce prominent composers of all countries to write for the band; (4) to establish for the concert band a higher standard of artistic excellence than has generally been maintained; (5) to do everything possible to raise the standards of bands and band music.

The charter members of this Association were Captain Charles O'Neill, Dr. A. Austin Harding, Dr. Frank Simon, Captain R. B. Hayward, Lieutenant J. J. Gagnier, Lieutenant Charles Benter, Victor J. Grabel, Arthur Pryor and Dr. Edwin Franko Goldman. Annual Conventions are held (Santa Fe, New Mexico, March 7-10, 1956) at which time
(Continued on page 27)

Music Educators' Round Table

Conducted by JACK M. WATSON

(Indiana University School of Music)

SINCE December is the month of the national meeting of the *National Association of Teachers of Singing*, that organization which is doing so much to advance the profession of voice teaching, it seemed fitting that we center the Round Table in this December issue on that field. To this end, I asked four highly intelligent and successful American-trained singers to search their store-houses of professional experience for points of advice to students and teachers of singing. The comments of Sally Sweetland, Norman Cordon, Jerome Hines and Earl Rogers are timely and authoritative because they are based on years of professional singing.

As an extra dividend, I asked a man who has given considerable thought and study to the problems of developing musicianship—Dr. Roy T. Will—for some cues to singers along this line.

Our thanks to these five distinguished persons for their relevant remarks, and our congratulations and best wishes to the *National Association of Teachers of Singing*.

—J.M.W.



PROFESSIONAL PROBLEMS

Jerome Hines

THE first problem that comes to my mind with regard to an operatic career is the tremendous gap that exists between the vocal studio and professional standing in America. In many cases American singers must jump almost directly from the vocal studio to the Metropolitan Opera House, with only a few professional performances between, due to the much deplored lack of opportunity in this country for operatic experience.

This transition is a tremendously difficult one and may mean the making or breaking of a career. When a singer is still in the student stage he sings on an average of one or two hours a day and performs once or twice a week in church or clubs. The bigger operatic or symphonic opportunities usually present themselves three or four times in a year.

While studying, if the student is in poor voice, he is sent home by his teacher to rest a day or two until he is recovered and if he has a cold or larynx infection he cancels all his

vocal activity for a couple of days.

In the professional repertory theatre the situation is entirely different. A new, young singer who enters the Metropolitan for his first season finds himself or herself immediately responsible for more than twenty roles, most of them leading parts which he probably will not sing for years to come, but parts in which leading singers must be covered in case of illness or other emergency. In a theatre such as the Metropolitan, which has frequent cast changes, it is not uncommon to have at least four or five people officially covering an important part as well as several others unofficially doing so.

Metropolitan Routine

This means that the young singer hardly enters the stage door of the Met before he is plunged into six to seven hours of rehearsals each day, plus the burden of singing three and four times a week, usually in minor parts. This extreme burden of rehearsing soon has its effect on the voice. The singer is physically tired and has no time or desire for lessons when his load is so heavy, and it is extremely hard to get up early in the morning and vocalize for an early rehearsal when one has gotten to bed at 1:30 A.M. after a performance. But this is precisely what happens.

The new singer begins by singing

all his rehearsals full voice. When the voice begins to sag under the load he then begins to sing all of his rehearsals without voice. After singing rehearsals without voice for a week or two and also without taking sufficient lessons, the singer finds his voice in very poor condition.

He then is also singing many small parts which are of no interest to him and he neglects preparing his voice to sing these parts, or, in the other extreme, tries to show off the size and beauty of his voice, all in the few lines allotted him, and shouts his head off and begins forcing his voice badly. It is not long before he begins waking up in the morning with some hoarseness and begins making the rounds of all the doctors in town. They finally convince him he needs his tonsils out, his septum removed, his sinuses drained, and of course he finally winds up as a chronic postnasal drip.

By now someone has convinced him that his whole trouble is his vocal technique, and as soon as he is thoroughly convinced that he knows nothing about singing (although he did sing well enough to get into the Met) he sets about trying the new teachers who spring up so quickly and decline even more quickly in the theatrical environment.

Thus what began as vocal and physical fatigue has grown into a men-



tal complex and general confusion. The singer has now abandoned what technique he had and now tries a new technique of singing every evening he puts his foot on the stage. Naturally, under such conditions, the poor muscles of his throat cannot possibly develop in any particular direction, and this vocal anarchy can very often result in the loss of a great career.

What Might Have Been

In the short nine years that I have been at the Metropolitan Opera I have seen many beautiful and potentially great voices lost in just this fashion. Surely this is not the whole story as to why so many great careers are ruined. Truly an operatic career is a complex thing based upon the singer's technique, physical stamina, emotional stability, intelligence and ambition, each factor entering into the over-all picture. But I do feel that even an inferior vocal technique which is pursued with diligence and consistent work pays off better than a superior technique intermittently and lazily applied. One can see singers of great stature in the profession who have techniques that make other singers shudder, and yet these same singers achieve great careers and keep their voices in service for a lifetime of singing. How is it possible? By virtue of the fact that the singer and teacher have worked together in harmony and unity of purpose and have kept at it diligently, studying and vocalizing in the same line day after day, year after year, without discouragement or lack of faith.

The fundamental principle is *work*. The next one for a singer is:—give your teacher a chance. Don't be a taster. Don't study three months and decide you know more than the teacher. He can tell you all he knows in ten minutes, but to put it in your throat may take ten years.

The most important factor in a singer after the voice itself, then, is the ability to judge for himself and not to panic easily, running from one extreme to the other. The singer must remain calm and put his faith in the right people. Only upon this foundation can a career be begun.

It is true that there are such things as good or bad techniques of singing, and good or bad teachers. But

this is another problem in itself and requires more space than I have at the moment. So for the present, my advice again to the singer is: Choose well and carefully, then put your faith in the teacher you have chosen and prepare to go to work. And above all, give your teacher a chance.

Jerome Hines, leading basso at the Metropolitan Opera, is famous for such roles as Mephistopheles in "Faust," Don Giovanni and Boris Godounoff. A graduate of the University of California, he is still active as a scientist, contributing regularly to journals of mathematics and other magazines.

PRACTICAL SINGING

Sally Sweetland

WHEN I was asked to write this article I was flattered by the request, yet a little frightened at attempting to give advice on such an intangible subject as the relationship



between a voice teacher and a pupil,—a relationship which to me is strong, yet delicate. Strong, because when a pupil finds a teacher he feels is sympathetic to his vocal problems, he gives himself over *completely* to that teacher. Thus, when the pupil enters the teacher's studio an alliance is formed, completely divorced from the outside world. The problems of the pupil become the problems of the teacher, and together they gird their loins to fight "tight throat," "weak diaphragm," and other "demons" which threaten a future career.

Emotional Problems

Delicate, because emotion plays such a great part in the life of a singer. The teacher must be prepared at each lesson to cope with any number of emotional disturbances brought into the studio by the student. Perhaps an important audition or role is lost to a seemingly inferior singer,—dejection and a feeling of frustration! Perhaps a new contract which may mean the fulfillment of a goal yearned for has been signed,—complete elation! From the lowest to the highest emotional state,

—these must be carefully dealt with by the teacher before the art of singing can be instilled into the aspiring young artist.

I had three wonderful teachers: Horatio Cogswell of the University of Southern California, Hypolite de Bernard, one-time assistant to Jean de Reszke, and Tena Taylor Rone, a charming woman with great understanding. Each of these teachers gave me a wonderful background for a satisfying and remunerative career. Although I shall never reach the stature of a Flagstad or a Pons, I have had a career on the outskirts of stardom which has been most gratifying,—thanks to the three people who understood the complexity of my needs. I had the *desire* to become a famous singing personality, but not the *ambition*. Desire is a dream of greatness without a positive goal. Ambition *compels* a direction toward a goal which is achieved by letting *nothing* stand in the way of that intense desire.

Know Your Students

If you will forgive the paraphrase on Gilbert and Sullivan,—“A Singer's Life Is Not a Happy One!” But, a teacher's life is even worse! He is praised for his contribution to the achievement of a star personality, and condemned for the misguidance of a passionate desire for stardom.

From past personal experience, the only advice I can give to a vocal teacher is that he try to *know* his student and his desires, and work with him to satisfy those desires, or to understand his ambitions and help to pave the way for their fulfillment.

To the student,—decide which is most important. Stardom, with all its trials in attaining each rung of the ladder to success, and tribulations in keeping on the top rung of that ladder and giving pleasure to millions; or the satisfaction of attaining a minor personal success with the knowledge that one may *still* give pleasure and help to millions. >>>

Sally Sweetland has been starred and featured on numerous radio and television shows, made many records and appeared as vocalist with leading dance bands. Her off-screen voice has also been used for such movie actresses as Joan Fontaine, Brenda Marshall, Eleanor Powell and Joan Leslie.

STUDENTS AND TEACHERS

Norman Cordon

THE first thing a student needs, obviously, is a good teacher. I started out with a bad one, with the result that I almost gave up the idea of ever being able to bring to fruition what I felt about myself potentially. But then I found a good one and stayed with him for four years, at the end of which time the voice revealed the depth and sonority originally native to it. I then came to the conclusion that what you bring to a teacher is about ten percent. The rest you have to work out, providing you may be led to lay down a direction that shall yield an ultimate result.

Every human being has a voice. But only a small percentage of people have a yen for its development toward glorified speech, which sing-



ing seems to be. It is these that are fit material for a teacher of singing. If it could be said that nature really doesn't play tricks such as giving to the one a great voice and to the other a bad one, then it follows generally that what we hear from each other is not good or bad voices in singing, but good or bad tone production. If that is the case, then there is a principle which pervades and permeates us. When the teacher works from the standpoint of this principle, then he automatically gets away from "methods" and the teaching makes sense. If he goes from the standpoint that nature plays tricks, then he is at once plunged into channels of guesswork, hit-or-miss methods and chance.

Intuition Helps

The one thing all human beings are equipped with is intuitive sense; if this is sufficiently awake, it will tell us if we are in the right hands or not. There is a wonderful intelligence in that area of consciousness which stimulates real judgment.

No teacher can help a student who has never sung spontaneously

for the mere fun of it. If we haven't experienced the joy of playing sandlot baseball, we can hardly be receptive to fine points from a professional coach. The energy back of the artistic activity is developed in the doing, good or bad, and not in the hoping or wishing or getting a voice teacher's O.K. before starting.

Taste and Style

The teacher must be equipped not only with knowledge of the voice, the diagnosis of vocal conditions and their treatment, but must have a background of fine musical experience, which will certainly serve him in getting his students to develop taste and style in singing.

Well-known artists before the public are not *ipso facto* first-class teachers of singing. It is quite human for them to view your vocal problems in terms of their own; and when they refer to their own past experiences, they will invariably come to false conclusions. It takes deep knowledge and years of experience to become a good teacher.

Avoid the coach who thinks because he has accompanied great sing-

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ers that he knows the voice, particularly if he has never taken the trouble to study singing and experience the sensations involved. He knows results but not causes.

The Human Angle

As for the active profession itself, that is a business proposition, with its attending competitive spirit. It is a problem of human relationships. Successful entrance into and participation in it depends largely upon the breaks, coming to you either unsolicited or by your own efforts.

As a last word, let me say there is no short cut to the attainment of a serviceable vocal technique. Therefore,—don't hurry; it takes time. And to teachers I should say: there is no end to knowledge concerning the great human organ of expression,—the voice. Enough said. ►►►

Norman Cordon, former Metropolitan Opera star, is now head of the North Carolina Music Program of the Extension Division of the University of North Carolina. In addition to lecturing throughout the State on the popular "Opera Film Forum" series, Dr. Cordon plans and presents the commentary on two radio programs.

THE CHORAL SINGER

Earl Rogers

WHENEVER people say to me, "I wish my Mary (or John) could get on a television program, even if only in the chorus," my indignation tentacles begin to bristle.



For you see, I am one of perhaps two or three hundred professional singers here in New York, who for the past fifteen to twenty years have made their careers just that,—singing in the chorus. The singing, for the most part, has consisted of performing in ensembles on radio, television and phonograph recordings. The work is interesting, fairly lucrative, and, to say the least, highly diversified. One may be asked to sing, during the course of the week, church music, songs currently on the "Hit Parade", commercial jingles, Gilbert and Sullivan, opera (in the original language) and anything else our employers want sung. Little importance

is attached to the singer's beauty of tone (and certainly none to the manner in which he achieves such beauty), but a great deal of attention is paid to three elements that are only too often neglected by many of our young voice students. I refer (1) to the ability to read music at sight rapidly and accurately, (2) the ability to sing the various types of music well, in their respective styles and (3) the ability to forego solo aspirations at the moment of singing in ensemble.

Since rehearsal time is paid for on an hourly basis, the networks, advertising agencies and phonograph companies can hardly be blamed for finding it more desirable to hire singers who read music well. It is common practice, for instance, for singers in ensemble groups, to walk into the recording studio and read the music for the first time together with the orchestra. On such television programs as the Firestone Hour, the aforementioned "Hit Parade", the Perry Como show and others, only an hour or so is spent on the actual learning of the notes, and

(Continued on page 24)

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Personal Reflections

On the Judging of Musical Competitions

DORIS A. PAUL

THE "festival" performance of the glee club from the little Michigan High School was bad. The director was inept; his conducting was poor and his interpretation rigid and unmusical. The voices were strained, the diction was unacceptable, and the club's faulty intonation was excruciating. At least, that was my opinion as one of the adjudicators.

I sat with pencil poised, trying to think of one encouraging thing to put down on the sheet. The ushers were waiting for the "go sign" from me before they admitted the next group of singers. The adjudicator at my left,—an *a cappella* man of some reputation,—had finished checking his sheet and making his personal comments, and now sat calmly awaiting the entrance of the next glee club. In desperation I whispered, "I can't think of one good thing to put down!" He looked surprised and said, "Well, for one thing, their intonation was excellent!" I thought he was joking at first, but soon saw I was wrong.

All at once I wondered what we were doing there,—what it was all about. Both of us had had years of experience in working with voices, listening intently for the same things: purity of tone, balance, good diction, sincere and effective interpretation, and above all, faultless intonation. But here we sat on the judges' bench, with opinions of a performing group at opposite extremes.

This was not my first experience of this type, nor my last; and I frankly wonder if the errors in judgment and differences in adjudicators' opinions should not make the directors who put great emphasis on the music festival pause to evaluate the worth of these competitive events.

I know all the arguments for the festival (motivation, awareness of what the other schools are doing,

etc., etc.); and I can hear some people exclaiming, "We no longer have contests as we used to have,—we have festivals!" They declare that these events are not competitive in the best sense.

I admit there is a difference. Now a glee club, orchestra, band, small ensemble or soloist, having performed badly, is rated as "4" along with other inferior musicians; and a superior group or soloist will go home boasting a "1" rating along with others who have performed well. This is a far cry from the days when a High School director had to go home with banners drooping and tell the editor of the town weekly that his performers were rated 14th

in a field of 14. A "4" is infinitely better than 14th place. But I maintain that the festival is still highly competitive.

When a director whose work has formerly been in the "1" bracket slips to a "2", he is crushed. The kids feel they have let him down; the director may take out his disappointment on the kids; and the school board, principal and parents may raise their respective eyebrows in a questioning manner. The sad state of affairs is that perhaps the whole thing is due to the fact that a judge has an aversion to modern harmony or is sick to death of the traditional, and so marked the director down on his elective number.

Unfortunately, many school boards
(Continued on page 28)



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FRED WARING MUSIC WORKSHOP

Delaware Water Gap, Pennsylvania

INSIDE METROPOLITAN OPERA BROADCASTS

(Continued from page 9)

re-edited, torn apart and edited again. Anyone remotely familiar with writing techniques knows that this is precisely what gives her scripts their spontaneous sound, for a labored sound on a radio program comes from too little writing, not too much of it.

Thus, long before any program is heard on the air, Mrs. Souvaine begins to collect opinions and points of view. She consults with The Texas

Company, members of the Kudner agency, members of the Metropolitan Opera Guild, writers, directors, and, of course, the management of the Metropolitan itself. Each group contributes something else, something different, and it is Mrs. Souvaine's job to combine them all and produce, after much consideration, a basic common denominator. It is out of this denominator that the script begins to take shape. Princi-

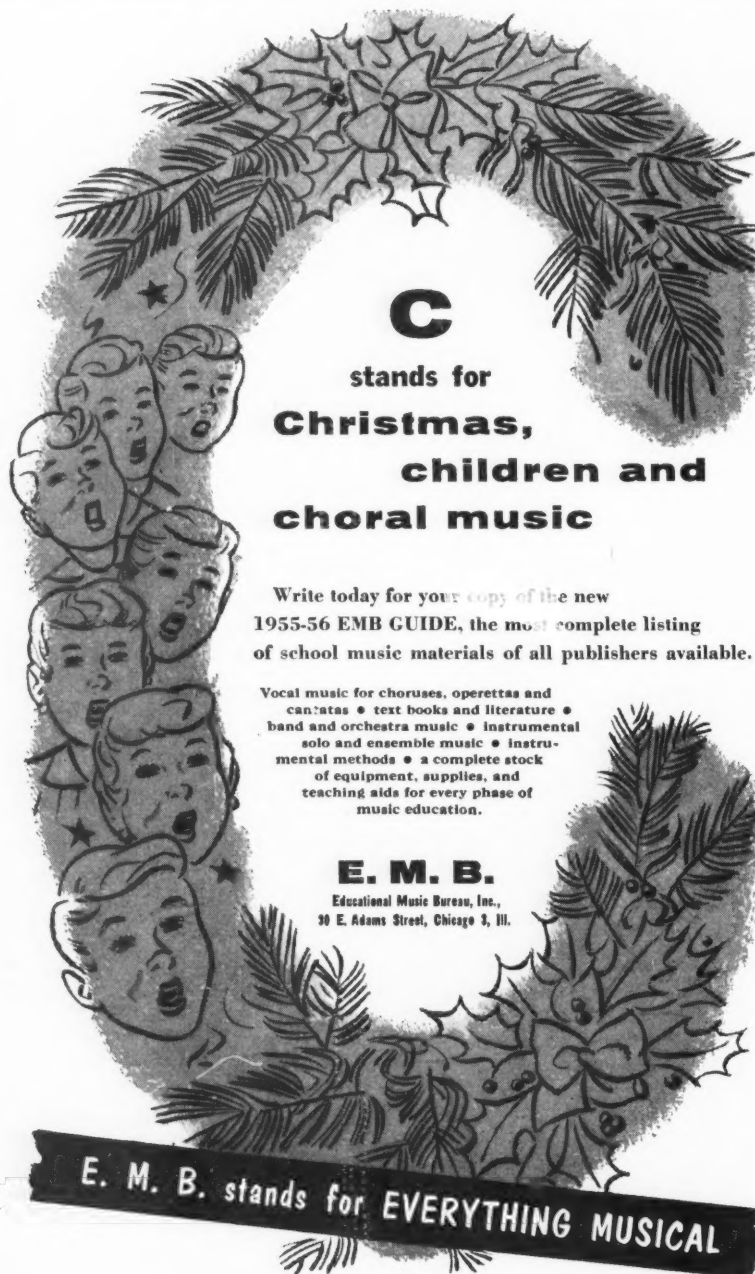
pally, therefore, Mrs. Souvaine has to keep her finger on every pulse and tie together the diverse suggestions and demands made by each group with a vested interest in the Saturday broadcasts.

As for the intermission features themselves, the Texaco Opera Quiz, following the second act, has always been a great popular favorite. A panel of experts is faced with questions dug out of musical history by the listeners, and roughly 10,000 letters submitting such questions are received each season. The main element, clearly, is accuracy of answers, and because listeners are not required to include the answers to their own questions, enormous research is necessary in this operation. And the fastidiousness of the research is indicated by the fact that in fifteen years perhaps two wrong answers have escaped the master of ceremonies, Robert Lawrence.

Opera News on the Air

In addition to the quiz, the program includes the much acclaimed and bemedalled Opera News on the Air, described by Mrs. Souvaine as "designed to help the audience understand opera and love it." This segment, heard after Act I, can vary from ten to twenty minutes and has as its master of ceremonies opera impresario Boris Goldovsky or composer Norman Dello Joio. As a rule, the function of this portion of the broadcast is to pin-point one aspect of opera, discuss it thoroughly with distinguished guests and give the listener a fuller knowledge of the great operatic masterpieces they hear each Saturday afternoon. Usually, some aspect of the work being sung that day is the subject of the discussion, though occasionally topics of general interest — opera in English, for instance — are used. Guests are invited according to their ability to talk on the particular phase of opera under scrutiny, and it is not a rarity to hear actress Helen Hayes one week, tenor Giovanni Martinelli the following and director Cyril Richard the next.

The third intermission feature, if demanded by the number of acts, comprises an interview with some notable in the field of art. Clifton Fadiman, as Texaco's Roving Opera Reporter, puts the questions, and among those who have answered



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them have been Gian-Carlo Menotti, Oscar Hammerstein II, Wanda Toscanini Horowitz, Walter Slezak, Ezio Pinza and Dame Edith Sitwell. The Roving Reporter does not confine himself to music alone but may, as in Dame Edith's case, concern himself with peripheral matters. Dame Edith was asked, among other things, if she were ever influenced by music in writing her poetry. She confessed, much to Mr. Fadiman's surprise, that she had been influenced by Stravinsky in writing "lines that never sagged."

Directly responsible for all of these programs is Mrs. Souvaine. She selects the guests and the writers, and sees to it that every word and every idea makes good, hard sense to an audience for whom music is food and drink. In this she is assisted by a large staff that adores her even to the point of forgetting the browbeating it takes when anything goes wrong.

Together, with Mrs. Souvaine as commander-in-chief, they are responsible for producing a program whose standards of excellence have not varied in fifteen years by so much as a hair. When announcer Milton Cross greets his listeners on Saturday afternoon on behalf of The Texas Company, 16 million listeners know what to expect. ▶▶▶

TUNE IN WEVD

Dec. 2 and 30, 8:15 P.M.

A NEW series of half-hour broadcasts begins on New York's radio station WEVD, AM and FM, on Friday evening, December 2, at 8:15. The program is called *Music Journal Presents Sigmund Spaeth* and consists of interviews with well known contributors to this magazine, accompanied by musical illustrations.

This feature is regularly scheduled for the last Friday evening of each month, but the opening broadcast takes place on the first Friday in December, to be followed by another on December 30, after which the dates will be January 27, February 24, March 30, April 27, etc.

Guests announced for December 2 are the composer-pianist Mana-Zucca and Joan Field, violinist, for ASCAP with Sigmund Spaeth as MC. On the last Friday of the month, December 30, the editor expects to interview Henry Cowell and Oliver Daniel of Associated Music Publishers, Inc.

Dr. Albert A. Renna, of Mt. Kisco, N. Y., has been appointed Advisory Educational Editor of the Edward B. Marks Music Corporation. He will continue his duties as co-ordinator of music in the Central School District and as visiting Professor of Music Education at the summer school of Syracuse University, while working in close association with Felix Greissle, the Marks director of publications, and Carl Zoehrens, the firm's sales manager. A rapid expansion is planned in the fields of band, choral and orchestral music and in educational materials in general.

The New Orleans Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra, directed by Alexander Hilsberg, will make a Spring tour of the Latin-American countries under sponsorship of the State Department, in co-operation with the International Exchange Program of the American National Theatre and Academy (ANTA). This is the first symphony orchestra to visit Latin America under such auspices and the fourth to receive governmental recognition, the others being the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Symphony of the Air and the New York Philharmonic-Symphony.

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CONFESSIONS OF A MUSICAL PRODIGY

(Continued from page 11)

to readjust its attitude. Ruggiero Ricci was handicapped by mismanagement as a boy, but eventually arrived at an artistic eminence that has received well deserved recognition.

My own case was rather different, first because I was never aware of being at all unlike other children and second because music was fun for me (besides bringing me pleasant by-products) and remained a recreation rather than a drudgery as I grew up.

The first piece I played in public, when less than four years old, was Gade's *Boys' Merry-Go-Round*, and I was convinced the applause was not for the music but for the new white kid shoes I was wearing for the first time. So I kicked them up in the air, one at a time, while taking my bows. Later I welcomed each concert appearance chiefly because it meant a new party dress.

By-Products of Talent

I am afraid I was strictly commercial from the very start. It is reported that at the age of two I sang a song in the street and made a habit of it when people threw pennies at me. Sometimes I even got fireworks before the Fourth of July!

For my third birthday my father gave me a toy piano, on which I immediately tried to play in the key of G. When I found that F-sharp was merely black paint and did not really sound, I burst into tears. This made such an impression that I was soon given lessons on a regular instrument.

My first teacher was a big, burly Russian named Platon Brunoff, who boarded with us in return for the lessons. I did not like him because he slapped me when I made mistakes. In time I won a scholarship with Alexander Lambert and at the age of eight played a Beethoven Concerto with Walter Damrosch and the New York Symphony Orchestra at Carnegie Hall.

Even then I had to be bribed to practice, mostly with candy and from time to time a new doll. At first it was two hours a day and then three and four. Even prodigies are inclined to be lazy and must be

treated like normal children in that respect. I loved to read fairy-tales and often managed to play scales mechanically with one hand while holding my storybook in the other.

My sister discovered this trick and supervised my practicing more carefully from then on. But she wisely realized that no child should be given a one-sided development and saw to it that I had plenty of time

for reading and recreation and essential school work.

Most children are musically creative, making up songs for the games they play, so it is not surprising that I began very early to compose little pieces "by my ear," to fit the stories I loved to read. By the time I married, I was ready to give up professional piano-playing in favor of composition. Incidentally, my husband, Irwin Cassel, a business man, wrote the words of the song, *I Love Life*, which many people unfortunately seem to consider the entire sum and substance of my creative

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work. I can't say I regret writing it, for *I Love Life* has brought in royalties that made more serious compositions possible. I see no insult in the label of "popular composer" and I feel sure no dedicated musician would honestly resent it.

Nor do I regret my early experience as a singer and dancer in light opera. It was all fun, and perhaps I found a malicious pleasure in having singers tell me I was a good dancer and vice-versa. (I had similar contradictory comments from composers and pianists when I was working in both fields.)

Under the circumstances I cannot honestly advise against the exploitation of prodigies, so long as someone in authority knows when to stop emphasizing the role of a circus freak and concentrate on integrity of artistic development. Parents need not be worried unduly if they find themselves blessed (or cursed) with a little musical genius. They can still provide their unusual offspring with a normal life, substitute hard work for miracles and let Nature take its course.

At the moment I am sincerely concerned with what I consider my most important work thus far,—a Violin Concerto which Joan Field is introducing at Hunter College and The Brooklyn Museum early in December, with Enrico Leide conducting the orchestra. This is only one of several compositions which may help real music-lovers forget the word "prodigy" in my case and concentrate on the present rather than the past. ►►►

Eight nationally famous bands are scheduled to appear at the Mid-West National Band Clinic at the Sherman Hotel, Chicago, Dec. 7-10. The executive secretary for this important event is Lee W. Petersen of Peru, Illinois.

The 50th anniversary of the Music Educators National Conference will be celebrated at the biennial convention in St. Louis, April 13-18, 1956. A feature will be the organization of a Golden Anniversary High School Band, Orchestra and Chorus under the sponsorship of the National Interscholastic Music Activities Commission and in co-operation with the MENC federated State units.

A four-day Mozart Festival will be held at the Long Beach, California, City College, January 26-29, 1956. Dr. Gerald Strang, head of the College Music Department, announces that the concluding work will be Mozart's great Mass in C Minor, sung by a choir of 100 voices. Another feature will be the youthful opera, *Bastien and Bastienne*.

The Columbia motion picture, *A Song to Remember*, presenting the life of Chopin on the screen, is now available in 16 mm form for schools, colleges, churches, clubs and homes. Detailed information will be supplied by Screen Gems, Inc., 233 West 49th St., New York City.

The Chicago Singing Teachers Guild, Chicago, Illinois, announces its nineteenth annual Prize Song Competition for the \$200 award offered by the W. W. Kimball Company of Chicago. The award will be made for the best original song submitted by a citizen and resident of the United States of America, the Dominion of Canada or any Central or South American Republic. If in the opinion of the judges it merits publication, it will be published by Carl Fischer, Inc., of New York. Complete information and contest rules may be obtained from Dr. George E. Luntz, Director, The School of Music, North Central College, Naperville, Illinois.

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THE CHORAL SINGER

(Continued from page 17)

during that time the singers must master the phrasing and dynamics as well. Therefore speed and accuracy are of the essence.

To sing well the current juke-box favorite and an English madrigal, each in its own style, is no mean accomplishment. And yet it has come to be expected of the singer who makes ensemble singing his or her profession. Looking through some records of the past few years, I find many instances of the demand for such versatility and flexibility. Last season I sang in the same week on the Milton Berle television show, on a radio program of hymns, on the radio program of Longine Choraliers and as background (oos, ahs, and hums) to a commercial announcer. The television show used original material for its production numbers—material that one generally associates with the opening song of a Broadway musical. This called for a clipped, non-legato, rhythmic style. The hymn program was, of

course, just the opposite—long, smooth cantilena lines.

Another week in the calendar shows a recording of madrigals (in French, Italian and English) and the next day a recording with Vaughn Monroe. Sometimes, too, we get valuable coaching from the soloists, as when Ezio Pinza spent quite a few minutes getting the chorus on the Telephone Hour to sing the Italian words correctly in the scene they were doing together from "Boris Godounoff".

Solo or Ensemble?

And now a final word about solo vs. ensemble. In solo singing the individual timbre is highly important. In ensemble singing it is important to blend the individual timbre with that of the other singers. I like to tell of the time when my friend, Tom, went to his first rehearsal of an octet on a well-known network program. After the rehearsal the chorus-master asked one of the veteran singers how Tom had fared. The reply was, "I'm not sure I even heard him"; to which the chorus-

master rejoined, "Fine! Let's keep him."

It has been said, "Once in the chorus, always in the chorus," and of this I can say that I have worked in ensembles with several singers who by continuing their studies arrived at success at the Metropolitan Opera or in leading roles on the Broadway operetta or musical comedy stage. In fact, one basso of my acquaintance continued singing in a quartet on a commercial radio program while he was at the Met because he needed the extra income to support his family. Yes, while the lazy singer may stay in the chorus exclusively, the more ambitious have positions as church soloists, have given Town Hall recitals to critical acclaim, have appeared with leading orchestras, and, what seems most important to me, lead active, purposeful, musical lives. ▶▶▶

Earl Rogers is currently editor of the N.Y.S.T.A. Bulletin and has had wide experience as a singer and teacher in various fields of vocal music.

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THEORY FOR SINGERS

Roy T. Will

In our times, of all men, singers are the most foolish. Rustics understand the science of agriculture at once, . . . but marvelous singers, and singers' pupils, though they sing every day for a hundred years, will never sing one antiphon, not even a short one, of themselves, without a master, losing time enough in singing to have learned thoroughly both sacred and secular letters.

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ALTHOUGH Guido had no possible conception of the opera singer or the recitalist, his criticism of the eleventh century church singer applies as well today as it has in



every generation since Guido's time. That it has led to a profession of "masters" and to the publication of countless books and methods designed to save the time which Guido felt was too valuable to waste may be considered economically desirable results of a bad situation. On the other hand, that the procedure is repeated in almost every generation,

and that in the repetition we still have singers whose independence of the master is questionable, would seem to indicate that we are no nearer a solution than was Guido.

Guido was promoting a system based on six syllables (later known as the hexachord) designed to improve music reading, but unrelated to such concepts as key, tonality, modulation and other much later theoretical ideas. There is no question that Guido's choir boys did improve in their reading ability by the application of his syllable system, and the continued use of his and other syllable systems in the centuries which followed has been with the same end in view. But in a more professional age than Guido's where time is an even more important factor and current repertoire demands much greater reading facility to win out in professional competition, Guido's concern over his choir boys seems rather naive.

In twentieth century language, our "foolish" singers are those who lack musicianship, a term defined by Hindemith as the possession of specialized vocal achievements together with a thorough knowledge of the subtle mechanism of music. "To-

gether with" implies an application of one to the other which divides musicianship into two areas,—theory and practice. Either one without the other is unacceptable.

If theory and practice together make musicianship, it must be an objective relationship and not a mystical or intuitive one. Guido did not teach his choir boys the eleventh century equivalent of harmony, counterpoint, form and analysis, ear training, etc., just because he thought it would be good for them; he taught them what he thought they needed to know in order to sing the music of the Church in a manner which would please their God,—who for Guido must have been creator, critic, public and artistic standards all rolled into one.

Without conscious criminal tendencies, the "master" of today, who like an amoeba has divided into theory teacher and voice teacher, is perpetuating the "foolish" singer. Not being versed in "pear-shaped tones" and "coupled resonators," I can honestly criticize only the theory teacher who is involved in the perpetuation. Our "foolish" singers need the instruction of a teacher who has evaluated the knowledge of the

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subtle mechanism of music in terms of real application, has eliminated the unessentials which only "clutter" the mind, and, with an eye toward the final goal of fine musicianship, uses teaching technics and materials which will get the job done as economically as possible. Such a teacher will question the value of the traditional framework of music theory (dictation, keyboard harmony, written harmony, form and analysis, counterpoint and sight-singing) and although not prompted by a "new broom" impulse will re-evaluate those technics which often become ends in themselves — dictation, syllable systems, figured basses, etc.—to be sure they are leading to improved musicianship. There is no question that such technics may be very effective, pedagogically, if they are used in such a way that they can be applied. They can also be dull, unimaginative

"busy work" perpetuating the master and engulfing the foolish singer, —a fate worse than ignorance.

Singers, more than other musicians, must rely on their ears, which become the keys, valves and strings of their "built-in" instruments. Their knowledge of the "subtle mechanism of music" is useful to them only insofar as it enables them to understand and evaluate what they receive aurally, and as it helps them to control what they produce as a result of a visual stimulus which is meaningful to them. The two processes, commonly known as music listening and music reading, are intricately involved with each other, and mean much more than that one likes to hear music and can do a passable job of reading it,—as a supposed mechanical skill. Listening implies intelligent understanding, both aesthetic and technical, and is in many ways the reverse process of music reading.

Just as a good typist has based his mechanical control of the typewriter keyboard on a knowledge of the language (aural and visual) so must the musician interpret musical notation in terms of a knowledge of music (aural and visual). Neither the typist nor the musician can develop his skill on a purely mechanical basis.


For the singer it is inadequacy in

one or both of these basic processes — listening and reading — which makes him "foolish" — which makes the union with any amount of vocal achievement fail to produce good musicianship. Though not always self-imposed, such a position is still untenable. When theory teachers really teach musicianship, and when singers achieve their independence as musicians, then will Guido's dictum be truly medieval. ▶▶▶

Dr. Roy T. Will is Chairman of Theory and Administrative Assistant to the Dean of the Indiana University School of Music. A Ph.D. of the Eastman School of Music, he has taught also at North Texas State College and Florida State University.

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BAND ASSOCIATIONS

(Continued from page 13)

the several cooperating bands are guest-conducted by the active members in attendance. Throughout the year there are committees on Music for Bands, Public Relations, International Instrumentation, the Band Composition Fund and on Industrial and Municipal Bands.

New projects undertaken this past year include the establishment of the "Uniforms by Ostwald" Annual Band Composition Award of \$500.00 and active promotion of the SOUSA SHRINE to be established at #318 B Street, Washington, D.C., the former home of John Philip Sousa. James C. Harper of Lenoir, North Carolina, is President for the year now in progress. Membership is by invitation only.

Other organizations which contribute in their own special ways to American band betterment on the national scene are the *National Catholic Bandmasters' Association*, President, Robert O'Brien, Notre Dame University, Notre Dame, Indiana; *Phi Beta Mu*, National School Bandmasters' Fraternity, Jack H. Mahan, Executive Secretary, 3507 Utah, Dallas 16, Texas; *Band Guide—A Professional Magazine for Band Conductors*, published quarterly by Roy Anderson, 10 Fiske Place, Mount Vernon, N.Y.; *Kappa Kappa Psi*, National Honorary Band Fraternity, Charles A. Wiley, Beaumont, Texas, Grand President; *Tau Beta Sigma*, National Honorary Band Sorority, Norma E. Parrish, Hamlin, Texas, National President and *Pi Kappa Omicron*, National Band Fraternity, National Headquarters, University of Louisville, Kentucky.

Excellent work is being done also by area Band Clinics and the many active State and smaller area organizations. It all adds up to progress in band betterment now and in the future! ▶▶▶

The Union of Polish Composers announces a world-wide competition for violin works with piano accompaniment, with three prizes totaling \$2,500. Entries may be submitted up to the end of March, 1956, and further details are available at the Polish Embassy, Washington, D.C.

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JUDGING MUSICAL COMPETITIONS

(Continued from page 18)

still feel that if their music teachers don't bring back top honors at the festivals, something is wrong.

I was accosted by a man in an Iowa town where three of us had gone out from State Teachers College to spend two days judging musical events. Announcement of decisions was to be delayed until the end of the second day. "I'm from . . . Blankville," he said. "Confidentially, how are the people from our town doing in the various events? I'm sort of scouting for the school board. If our music teacher doesn't come through with honors this year I guess I'll have to fire her. It's her last chance to show us what she can do."

I wondered how far this teacher had brought the students in music from the point where she had found them when she went to Blankville. A winning orchestra can't be built in two or three years when they are forced to compete with organizations that have been in the making over a period of many years!

Odd things control decisions sometimes. A couple of years ago a discouraged director in Colorado reported to me what had happened in a festival a few days before. This was her story. She had attended a summer music workshop preceding the school year, and was thrilled with the direc-

tion of a famous choral man at the workshop. She chose one of his compositions to use as the elective number for the festival, and was coached by him on its interpretation.

Imagine her surprise when programs were completed and notices were sent out to all High Schools in the region. This man was to act as adjudicator at the big event!

But a few days before the festival, disaster struck and the composer died. A substitute judge was hurriedly summoned to take his place. After the performance, the High School director was shocked to find her choir rated rather low, with this comment appended to the rating, "This music was certainly not interpreted as the composer intended it to be!"

A couple of years ago, three of us struggled for agreement on decisions at a college sorority "sing." Two of us stood together in our opinion, but the third judge was slow in coming through. In interrogating him on reasons for contesting our first choice he admitted that the girls had sung well, that their costumes were attractive, that they had good direction, and that the rendition had been well taken by the large audience that covered the green hillside in front of the band shell. Then he finally broke down and said, "I just don't like the song they chose, I guess. I never *have* liked it!"

To compensate for a competing director's wrecked nerves, and for

the strain and fatigue of students who must sing or play festival numbers until they are weary of them, and for the expense involved in transportation, new uniforms, etc., those in charge of competitions should take infinite care in making all arrangements.

Adjudicators should be experts in the areas in which they are judging; the critic judge plan should, in almost every case, give way to a multiple judge plan, to minimize the chance of a perverted personal viewpoint; and the public should be educated, if possible, to place less emphasis on their schools' winning top ratings every year.

After all, excellence in performance can be measured,—like progress in all forms of education—by the yardstick of individual and group improvement over a given period of time. We should ask ourselves this question, "Was our performance better than it was last year?"—*not*, "Was our performance better than Hillsboro's or Jonestown's?" ►►►

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